# No Response Received On Historic District Idea

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Last November, the Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission submitted to the City of Scranton a proposal to create an historic district throughout the entire downtown.

Now, 10 months later, Rocco Campagna, executive director of the LCRPC, said he has yet to hear "pro or con" about the concept.

Campagna said the historic district concept is rather timely in light of a comment Monday by Don Ball, director of Steamtown U.S.A.

Ball, who is considering moving the steam museum from Bellows Falls, Vt., to Scranton, said in a story published in *The Times* on Monday that the city should consider getting the existing Conrail yards being eyed as Steamtown's new home listed on the National Historic Register in order to preserve its architectural and historic integrity.

Campagna believes that Ball's idea should be pursued, but he said that the city should not stop with the train yards. Instead, he said, it should consider the downtown historic district plan submitted by the LCRPC.

The LCRPC proposal was developed as a result of a physical survey of buildings in the subject area bounded on the north by Olive Street, on the west by Hallstead Court, on the south by Bogart Place and on the east by Madison Avenue.

A total of 145 buildings within the boundary area were picked out as being potentially historical edifices. Among the buildings not selected were those constructed within the last several decades.

"It is our feeling that the ordinance (an ordinance would be required to implement the historic district), if adopted and implemented,

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# Word Awaited by LCRPC

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will result in the enhancement of downtown Scranton and should stimulate the rehabilitation process, which I feel is imperative as the first step along the way of revitalizing Scranton's central business district," Campagna said.

The ordinance would provide for the establishment of an Historical Architectural Review Board that would make recommendations to City Council regarding requests to in any way alter buildings which have been designated as historic.

It also would establish an appeal process providing for notification to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Thus, the historic district, as proposed by the LCRPC, would not provide property owners with a vehicle through which they could seek public money and tax credits for restoration or reconstruction. That windfall for property owners would only happen if the city takes the time required to go through the proper channels to get the downtown district designated on the National Historic Register — a process already completed by several towns, including Bellefonte in Central Pennsylvania and Cape May, N.J.

City clerk Frank Naughton said he is familiar with the LCRPC proposal, which was submitted on Nov. 5, 1981. He said the plan was studied by former city planner Alexander Hazzouri, who reportedly found several technical problems with the idea.

Hazzouri, who left the city planner's post recently to become director of the Lackawanna-Susquehanna-Wayne Mental Health/Mental retardation Association, is vacationing and unavailable for comment.

Naughton could only guess that Hazzouri never contacted the LCRPC staff regarding the plan because the city changed administrations about the time the proposal was received. At present, no one has been named to fill Hazzouri's post.

Mayor James Barrett McNulty said he isn't familiar with the LCRPC plan.